FBIS DAILY REPORT

MIDDLE EAST & SOUTH ASIA REVIEW

18 MARCH 1987

Lebanon

Hostages — The Organization of Revolutionary Justice (ORJ) announced its decision to postpone the execution of French hostage Jean-Louis Normandin for a week in light of the appeal by Shi'ite cleric Shaykh Muhammad Husayn Fadlallah, AFP reported. The ORJ statement, which was accompanied by a photograph of Normandin, warned that France must send "delegations" to provide the "necessary clarifications" of French policy. It said this "will either improve the situation or mean that blood flows." The ORJ also threatened new terror attacks inside France if the French Government does not fulfill its demands.

In another development, Amal Movement leader Nabih Birri announced the release of a kidnapped Saudi diplomat during an 18 March press conference reported by Voice of National Resistance radio. Syrian Brigadier General Ghazi Kan'an also spoke at the conference, disclosing that Amal had taken measures to release the diplomat after receiving information on his whereabouts. Kan'an had earlier expressed confidence that the four kidnapped Beirut University College teachers will be released soon, according to Beirut radio.

Security — Fighting continued between Amal and Palestinian gunmen in the Burj al-Barajinah and Shatila areas, Voice of Lebanon radio reported. "Informed" sources cited by the radio asserted that the Syrians have supplied the Amal Movement with weapons and ammunition which they confiscated on their arrival in West Beirut, noting that this has caused resentment among other organizations, particularly the PSP. The "Lebanese Liberation Front" claimed responsibility for killing two Syrian soldiers in a machine gun attack the night of 17 March, according to the clandestine Radio Free Lebanon.

Three IDF soldiers were wounded by mortar fire in the central sector of southern Lebanon 17 March, Jerusalem radio disclosed.

Gulf War: Shipping Attacks

Iraqi planes attacked two large maritime targets near the Iranian coast in separate raids 17 and 18 March, according to a military statement broadcast by Voice of the Masses radio. Both targets received "accurate and effective blows."

Earlier, marine insurance sources in the Gulf revealed that a Cypriot oil tanker was under tow to Dubayy after being damaged by a missile launched from an Iranian vessel near the island of Abu Musa, Nicosia radio reported.

Iran

The Ministry of Intelligence announced further charges of kidnapping and murder against Mehdi Hashemi, who was arrested last October, Tehran radio reported. Two more arms caches belonging to Hashemi and his group were discovered, and the ministry said it had been able to "foil the conspiracy of this dangerous group."

In a televised confession 17 March, Hashemi and two of his accomplices admitted they had murdered three men last year, IRNA disclosed. They described their crimes and called their actions "totally unislamic" and "totally deviated."

Egypt

President Husni Mubarak called on citizens to be vigilant and stand against any attempts to incite sedition, referring to attempts to rouse sectarian strife which accompanied the People's Assembly election campaigns, MENA reported. In a 17 March speech to local leaders in Al-Minya Governorate, Mubarak said that providing the opportunity for a group "to sow the seeds of hostility between Muslims and Christians" aims at destroying the entire community.

Israel

The cabinet attaches great importance to the fact-finding committee into the Pollard affair and will "honor its conclusions," the cabinet secretary announced in a statement broadcast by Jerusalem television after a 17 March cabinet meeting. In a related development, Prime Minister Yitzhaq Shamir told the Hadassah Convention that he is certain there are no Israeli spies operating in the United States, Jerusalem radio noted.

Tunisia-Algeria

Tunisian Foreign Minister Hedi Mabrouk held "rich and very important" talks with his Algerian counterpart Taleb Ibrahimi and President Chadli Bendjedid 17 March, Algiers radio reported. According to APS, Ibrahimi and Mabrouk examined developments in the Maghreb with a view to providing new impetus to the fraternity and concord treaty.

Morocco

King Hassan II received visiting Chadian Foreign Minister Gouarra Lassou, who brought a message from Chadian President Hissein Habre, MAP announced. Paris radio added that the meeting dealt with the military situation in Chad and the possible return of former GUNT leader Goukouni Oueddei to Ndjamena.

Libya

Colonel Mu'ammar al-Qadhdhafi held a final meeting with YAR President 'Ali 'Abdallah Salih 17 March, JANA noted. In a statement to JANA, Salih affirmed his visit achieved "positive results."

FBIS DAILY REPORT

CONTENTS

South Asia

Vol VIII No 052 *18 March 1987*

MIDDLE EAST & SOUTH ASIA REVIEW i

AFGHANISTAN

Najibullah Addresses PDPA on Returnees ..... C 1
Najibullah Receives Village Party Secretaries ..... C 1
Rebel 'Adviser' Warns Against Reconciliation Policy *[Brussels LE SOIR 13 Mar]* ..... C 1
AFP: Soviets Reportedly Sending in 'Fresh Troops' ..... C 2
Mujahidin Down Kabul Regime Plane in Jalalabad *[Karachi]* ..... C 2

INDIA

U.S. Did Not 'Consult' on Indian Ocean SDI Role ..... E 1
Speaker Bars Discussion of Gandhi-Singh Letters ..... E 1
Gandhi, Soviet Official Discuss Cooperation ..... E 1
Proposals 'Now Acceptable' to Sri Lanka ..... E 1
Government Cannot Agree to Eelam ..... E 1
Curfew Ordered in Patiala Following Incidents ..... E 1
Sikh 'Extremist' Held for Hoshiarpur Bus Massacre ..... E 2
'No Option' But 'To Match' Pakistan's Nuclear Ability *[INDIAN EXPRESS 6 Mar]* ..... E 2

PAKISTAN

Romania's Ceausescu Arrives on Visit 18 Mar ..... F 1
Discusses Relations With Ziaul Haq ..... F 1
Concludes Visit; Departs ..... F 1
Junejo April Visits to UK, Belgium Previewed ..... F 1
Spokesman on Troop Pullout From Border Areas ..... F 1
'Vast' Indian Capacity for Making Nuclear Weapons *[DAWN 6 Mar]* ..... F 1

IRAN

Mehdi Hashemi Confesses to Murder Charges ..... I 1
Besharati Returns From Guyana Nonaligned Meeting ..... I 1
Ministry Says Opposition Group 80 Percent Smashed ..... I 1
Oil Minister Announces New Distribution Policy ..... I 2
Tehran Reports Budget Figures For Next Year ..... I 2
Montazeri Compliments Air Force on Victories ..... I 2
SAIRI's Hakim Reviews Situation in Iraq ..... I 2
Iraqi POW's Repatriated; 26 Seek Asylum ..... I 3
Guards Corps Announces Volunteers' Departure Dates ..... I 3
Forces Dispatched for Fronts ..... I 3
Communique No 2,778 Reports Enemy Casualties ..... I 3
No 2,779 Reports 6 Ships Intercepted ..... I 3
Troops Enjoy Full Superiority in 'Karbala' 5' ..... I 4
Nicosia Reports Cypriot Tanker Hit by Missile ..... I 4

Najibullah Addresses PDPA on Returnees

LD180934 Kabul BAKHTAR in English 0530 GMT 18 Mar 87

[Text] Kabul, March 17, BAKHTAR — A session held here at the headquarters of the PDPA CC, chaired by Najib, general secretary of the PDPA CC, studied and discussed the matters pertaining to the facilities to be provided to the countrymen returning from abroad. The guaranteeing of their political and socio-economic rights, their employment, provision of accommodation, and other necessary facilities to enable them to participate actively in the socio-economic activities and for the realisation of the policy of national reconciliation, were studied and discussed.

Najib instructed the concerned departments to take urgent measures for rendering assistance to the returnees such as the extension of medical assistance and their children's education.

The session also studied and discussed a number of other issues concerning the normalisation of the life of the returnees. Najib also specified the functions of the concerned organs in this regard.

Members of the Politburo, Secretariat of the Central Committee of the PDPA, and leading officials of some of the ministries attended the meeting.

Najibullah Receives Village Party Secretaries

LD180706 Kabul BAKHTAR in English 0507 GMT 18 Mar 87

[Text] Kabul, March 17, BAKHTAR — Najib, general secretary of the PDPA CC, received the secretaries of primary party organisations of the villages, who had come to Kabul to attend a training seminar.

Najib specified the great responsibilities of the secretaries of the primary party organisations of the villages for the further consolidation of people's power in the villages and instructed them to assist the clergymen for the cessation of bloodshed and ensuring nation-wide peace in the country.

The secretaries of primary party organisations play a significant role in ensuring peace and consolidation of ties between the party and the masses.

Rebel 'Adviser' Warns Against Reconciliation Policy

PM171210 Brussels LE SOIR in French 13 Mar 87 p 1

[Interview with (Mohammed Zaher Siddiq), political adviser to Afghan resistance movement Jami'at-e Eslami, by Abed Attar — date and place not given]

[Text] [Attar] You are political adviser to Jami'at-e Eslami, one of the main Afghan resistance organizations, and also a writer known for your works on the Soviet Union. You are therefore fighting the occupation of your country with a pen which, you say, may be mightier than the sword. After visiting Paris and Brussels, you plan to go to Bonn and Washington. Is your tour a follow-up to the one Mr Rabbani, the chairman of your organization, made last year?

[(Siddiq)] First, it is by no means certain that I will be able to go to Bonn and Washington. I do not yet have a visa and there are many problems in obtaining one. However, I am in Brussels to warn Western opinion against Gorbachev's diplomatic offensive, and more especially against the policy of national reconciliation advocated by Najibullah, his puppet in Kabul. The mujahidin will never be reconciled with a traitor and will not lay down their arms as long as the Soviet troops occupy our country.

[Attar] And yet, at the indirect Afghan-Pakistani negotiations in Geneva, the Russians seem to have adopted a more flexible position, making it known that they would be prepared to withdraw their expeditionary force within 22 months.

[(Siddiq)] Geneva is just window dressing. The Russians are making a pretense of wanting a political solution, while in practice, they are trying to impose a military solution by pursuing a war of extermination and indulging in unprecedented atrocities. Moreover, no agreement reached in Geneva can be accepted by the Afghan people, because it puts the cart before the horse by advocating an international guarantee of the end to foreign interference in Afghanistan's internal affairs (this is aimed at depriving the mujahidin of military aid from friendly countries), the voluntary return of refugees, and then the withdrawal of Soviet forces.

The resistance also wants a political solution. If the Russians are prepared to leave Afghanistan, why are they waiting? Let them leave without any fuss, in the same way they arrived in Kabul. Believe me, the Russians do not want to leave Afghanistan without leaving behind them a regime that is loyal to them. Unfortunately, the United States seems inclined to accept such a solution. But we reject this divisive policy. A solution must be found to the Afghan problem that corresponds to the Afghan people's wishes and to their conditions.

[Attar] Are you not afraid that civil war will break out after the withdrawal of the Red Army soldiers?

[(Siddiq)] No, we are a peace-loving and peaceful people. If necessary, the resistance might agree to the presence of "blue helmets" (provided by countries of its choice) who would have the task of ensuring that the Soviet troops withdraw without blunders and guaranteeing free and honest elections with a view to establishing a neutral Islamic republic, not like Austria, but like Switzerland.

[Attar] Why not like Austria?

[(Siddiq)] Because Austria has been neutralized. We want a strong army which will be the symbol of our national pride and our Islamic identity.

[Attar] Would your republic be an Islamic republic, following the Iranian or Pakistani model?

[(Siddiq)] The Afghans want a republic governed by a humanistic form of Islam.... They want an Islam that has not been distorted by reactionary and aggressive fanaticism.

AFP: Soviets Reportedly Sending in 'Fresh Troops'

BK171426 Hong Kong AFP in English 1408 GMT 17 Mar 87

[Text] Islamabad, March 17 (AFP) — Thirteen Soviet geological experts were killed in an attack by Afghan guerrillas on a mining area near Kabul, Western diplomats here said Tuesday.

They said the Moslem mujahidin guerrillas launched an offensive at the Lowgar copper mines late last month and executed Soviets working as mine supervisors.

The guerrillas also raided an Afghan colliery in Baghlan, capturing 32 coal mine workers, the diplomats said. They speculated that the insurgents needed help in building underground fortifications for protection against Soviet bombs.

The diplomats said that the mujahidin, battling a government in Kabul that is backed by some 120,000 Soviet troops, had intensified their activities in the country's north and east.

The rebels captured five Soviet soldiers during a battle in the eastern Nangarhar Province last week, the diplomats said. They gave no details.

The diplomats said that more rebel groups had infiltrated Kabul, where Muslim guerrillas last week slit the throats of three Soviets, including an Army officer. The bodies were found in a secluded well.

The Soviets reportedly were sending fresh troops into the country, the diplomats said. They reported that air arrivals in Afghanistan were heavy most nights.

The diplomats, quoting what they said were reliable sources, reported that the Soviets were expanding their existing facilities in Kabul garrisons where they have some 22,000 soldiers, beside 12,000 Afghan troops.

The report of an influx of new troops contrasted with speculation in Kabul that an announcement of a unilateral Soviet pullout was planned to coincide with the Afghan new year on Saturday.

But Eastern European diplomatic sources said the Soviets had dismissed rumours of the withdrawal of another 50,000 troops by the end of this year. The Soviets pulled out six regiments last year.

The diplomats reported heavy fighting in the northern Afghan provinces and said it was escalating in areas where rebels reportedly shot down half a dozen helicopters and three jets.

Guerrillas fighting in Qandahar, the country's second-largest city, destroyed 12 armoured vehicles, the diplomats said. They said that about 50 casualties were reported among the Soviet-Afghan troops.

They said another 50 soldiers in the Soviet-Afghan forces were reported killed when the mujahidin ambushed a convoy on Salang highway last week.

Mujahidin Down Kabul Regime Plane in Jalalabad

BK180618 Karachi Domestic Service in Urdu 0600 GMT 18 Mar 87

[Text] According to a report, the mujahidin shot down a plane of the Kabul regime in the suburbs of Jalalabad, killing all 16 people on board. The report says that the mujahidin also attacked the Jalalabad airport recently and inflicted heavy losses. Another report says that the mujahidin attacked the Qandahar airport as well and damaged several Soviet-Kabul helicopters and planes.

U.S. Did Not 'Consult' on Indian Ocean SDI Role

BK171352 Delhi General Overseas Service in English 1330 GMT 17 Mar 87

[Text] The Rajya Sabha was informed today that the United States did not consult India about the possibility of using the Indian Ocean region for its Strategic Defense Initiative. The minister of state for external affairs, Mr Natwar Singh, said that the government will continue to make diplomatic efforts in the UN and other international forums to secure implementation of the resolutions seeking to declare the Indian Ocean a zone of peace.

Speaker Bars Discussion of Gandhi-Singh Letters

BK180947 Delhi Domestic Service in English 0830 GMT 18 Mar 87

[Text] In the Lok Sabha today the speaker, Mr Balram Jakhar, made it clear that correspondence between the president and the prime minister is a confidential matter between them and he cannot allow it to be raised in the House. The speaker gave this ruling when several opposition members sought to raise the issue. Not satisfied with the speaker's ruling, most of the opposition members staged a walkout. The minister for parliamentary affairs, Mr H.K.L. Bhagat, said the behavior of the opposition is most undemocratic and depressing.

Gandhi, Soviet Official Discuss Cooperation

BK180338 Delhi Domestic Service in English 0240 GMT 18 Mar 87

[Text] India and the Soviet Union are to finalize a program for joint research, invention, and perfection of new technology suitable for application in commercial fields. This was disclosed by the president of the Soviet Academy of Sciences, Mr G.I. Marchuk, in Bombay yesterday. He told newsmen that possible areas of cooperation between the two countries include nuclear sciences, isotope processing, and using radiation for medicine as well as (?nutrition) of plant. Mr Marchuk later flew to Jammu and Kashmir and met the prime minister, Mr Rajiv Gandhi. He is heading a 32-member delegation of Soviet scientists.

Proposals 'Now Acceptable' to Sri Lanka

BK181523 Delhi General Overseas Service in English 1330 GMT 18 Mar 87

[Text] The minister of state for external affairs, Mr Natwar Singh, has informed the Lower House of Parliament that indications in the last 48 hours (?show) that in Sri Lanka the economic blockade of Jaffna is being unwound and military operations being scaled down.

Replying to the special discussion on the subject in the House today, he said indications are also there that 19 December proposals of last year are now acceptable to the Sri Lankan Government. He told the members that these developments followed a meeting of the prime minister's special envoy, Mr Dinesh Singh, with President Jayewardene in Colombo. Mr Dinesh Singh carried a message from Mr Rajiv Gandhi for Mr Jayewardene. Mr Natwar Singh said that if the Sri Lankan Government confirms that the 19 December proposals are acceptable to it then the Indian Government would contact the Tamil groups and place the proposals before them for their consideration. The Indian Government (?would) use its good offices only if it is convinced about the stand of the Sri Lankan Government.

Government Cannot Agree to Eelam

BK181655 Delhi Domestic Service in English 1530 GMT 18 Mar 87

[Excerpts] The minister of state for external affairs, Mr Natwar Singh, told the Lok Sabha today that there are indications that the Sri Lankan Government is attempting to unwind the economic blockade and reduce military operations against the Tamils in the island. [passage omitted]

The minister made it clear that the Indian Government cannot agree to an Eelam, a separate state. He said a solution to the ethnic crisis will have to be found within the constitutional frame-work of Sri Lanka. The minister referred to the recent Colombo visit of the prime minister's special emissary, Mr Dinesh Singh, who carried a message for President Jayewardene. Mr Dinesh Singh informed the Sri Lankan Government of India's concern over the deteriorating security environment in the region. In response to several members' demand that India should send humanitarian aid and relief to the Tamils in the northern Jaffna peninsula, he said we keep our options open.

Referring to the resolution adopted by the Human Rights Commission in Geneva on Sri Lanka, he said it is a moral defeat for the Sri Lankan Government. Initiating the discussion, Mr Balwant Singh Ramoowalia, Akali Dal-Longowal, demanded immediate action on the part of Indian Government to ensure that genocide of innocent Tamils in Sri Lanka stop immediately. He described the economic blockade of Jaffna as inhuman and said it should be lifted. He was supported by other members, who said that a strong world opinion should be built against the Sri Lankan Government for violating human rights. They expressed serious concern at the reported involvement of foreign powers and mercenaries in Sri Lanka.

Curfew Ordered in Patiala Following Incidents

BK171633 Delhi Doordarshan Television Network in English 1600 GMT 17 Mar 87

[Text] In Punjab, indefinite curfew has been clamped in Patiala in the wake of some violent incidents. This followed the gunning down of the local Bharatiya Janata Party leader, Mr Sambhu Prasad. The gunman of Mr Sambhu Prasad and one more person were injured in the attack.

Sikh 'Extremist' Held for Hoshiarpur Bus Massacre

BK180311 Delhi Domestic Service in English
0240 GMT 18 Mar 87

[Text] According to PTI, the Amritsar police have arrested Baldev Singh Maskin, an alleged extremist, who is said to be the brain behind the Khurda bus massacre in Hoshiarpur District in November last. The suspect is an employee of the Shiromani Gurdwara Prabandhak [Sikh temple management] Committee.

'No Option' But 'To Match' Pakistan's Nuclear Ability

BK141119 Delhi INDIAN EXPRESS in English
6 Mar 87 p 8

[Editorial: "Talk and Prepare"]

[Text] The removal of Mr Mushahid Hussain, the young and fearless journalist, from the editorship of the *Muslim* must convince even the Americans that Dr Abdul Qadir Khan had said all that Mr Kuldip Nayyar had reported him as saying. Mr Hussain was with Mr Nayyar when he talked to Dr Khan in January. As Dr Khan prevaricated, Mr Hussain confirmed the substance of the interview in his editorial on Tuesday. As a consequence, he was attacked with a vehemence, a savagery that only those who live under dictatorships, can recognise. Condemned in the assembly as a "traitor" and much else, he has had to "resign". Such is the price for speaking truth.

But the truth it is. Dr Khan clearly said that Pakistan already has the atomic bomb and unless his statement was a red rag aimed at provoking India, we must assume the worst, that Pakistan is on its way to building a nuclear arsenal. In response we must talk as well as prepare. If the superpowers, which have stockpiled enough nuclear and more lethal weapons to destroy the world many times over, are talking to see whether there is any way to reverse the race to mutual annihilation, countries like India and Pakistan have even greater reason to search, and to go on searching, for any possible way that would enable them to turn back. They are, after all, just setting out on this route.

India must also take up Dr Khan's disclosures in every available international forum. This will further document the duplicity of some governments and, indeed, the legislatures of countries like the U.S. which tout laws saying one thing while they themselves underwrite steps that fly in the opposite direction. Taking the matter up in these fora will give these governments yet another opportunity even at this penultimate stage to do what they can or will to persuade Pakistan to see reason.

An Indian decision to build a bomb cannot be built around a statement alone, even if it is from the head of Pakistan's nuclear programme. Such a decision will have to be based on all available indications of the true state of affairs. But the government must unambiguously announce that faced with what Pakistan is doing, and what its allies are not doing, India will have no option but to match Pakistan's nuclear capability.

Romania's Ceausescu Arrives on Visit 18 Mar

BK180943 Karachi Overseas Service in English
0800 GMT 18 Mar 87

[Text] President Nicolae Ceausescu was accorded a warm welcome when he arrived in Karachi this afternoon on a brief visit. President Mohammad Ziaul Haq, who earlier had flown in to Karachi, received the distinguished guest at the airport. Others present included the Sind governor, Mr Ashraf Wali Tabani; the minister for housing and works, Haji Mohammad Hanif Taiyab; and the minister of state for foreign affairs, Mr Zain Noorani. President Ceausescu is accompanied by a 40-member entourage including the foreign minister. Later, the Romanian president accompanied by the Pakistani president drove to the governor's house. The president is hosting a lunch in honor of President Ceausescu.

Discusses Relations With Ziaul Haq

BK181159 Karachi Domestic Service in English
1100 GMT 18 Mar 87

[Text] President Ceausescu of Romania and President Mohammad Ziaul Haq held talks in Karachi this afternoon on international issues and the situation in the region with particular reference to the Afghanistan problem. They also reviewed bilateral relations. In their review of bilateral relations, the two leaders discussed the difficulties experienced in the past. They agreed to give further impetus to their economic collaboration and promote cooperation in technical, educational, and other spheres. They also discussed measures to rectify the balance of trade between Pakistan and Romania. The two presidents continued their informal discussions during the luncheon hosted by President Mohammad Ziaul Haq in honor of the Romanian president.

Concludes Visit; Departs

BK181543 Karachi Domestic Service in Urdu
1500 GMT 18 Mar 87

[Excerpt] Romanian President Ceausescu was given a very warm send-off when he left Karachi for Bucharest this afternoon after a brief visit. During the visit, he held talks with President Mohammad Ziaul Haq. [passage omitted]

Junejo April Visits to UK, Belgium Previewed

BK181545 Karachi Domestic Service in Urdu
1500 GMT 18 Mar 87

[Text] Prime Minister Mohammad Khan Junejo will pay an 8-day visit to Britain beginning 8 April. He will then go to Belgium for a 2-day official visit. A Foreign Office spokesman told newsmen in Islamabad today that the prime minister will hold talks with his British counterpart, Mrs Margaret Thatcher, and meet with many senior members of the British Cabinet. Mr Mohammad Khan Junejo will go to Edinbourough, Glasgow, and Birmingham and meet with Pakistanis residing there.

Radio Pakistan's representative says that Pakistan enjoys multilateral relations with Britain characterized by close understanding on various issues and diverse economic cooperation. The prime minister will also address a 3-day conference of Pakistani ambassadors in Europe, which will be held beginning 10 April in London. During his visit to Belgium, he will hold talks with his Belgian counterpart on matters of mutual interest.

Spokesman on Troop Pullout From Border Areas

BK181130 Karachi Domestic Service in English
1100 GMT 18 Mar 87

[Text] Pakistan and India have started withdrawal of their troops from Chhor in Sind and Barmer in Rajasthan besides Mandi Sadiqganj in Bahawalnagar and Hindumalkot in Rajasthan from the 16th of this month. The withdrawal is expected to be completed in 5 to 6 weeks.

A Foreign Office spokesman told newsmen in Islamabad today that discussions will take place soon for the withdrawal of troops from the remaining sector north of Mandi Sadiqganj, Hindumalkot to River Ravi.

'Vast' Indian Capacity for Making Nuclear Weapons

BK131527 Karachi DAWN in English 6 Mar 87 p 7

[Editorial: "India's Outcry: Facts and Fiction"]

[Text] The Indian Prime Minister's statement in Lok Sabha on Tuesday about Pakistan's "clandestine efforts to produce an atomic bomb", and his diatribe against those who can dissuade it from this course (impliedly the U.S.), is strange logic. Mr Rajiv Gandhi is also reported to have asked his External Affairs and Defence Ministries to investigate the "consequence" of the "disclosure about a Pakistani bomb" made by an Indian journalist supposedly on the basis of an "interview" with the renowned Pakistani nuclear physicist, Dr A.Q. Khan. Whatever the truth about the meeting between the Pakistani scientist and the Indian journalist, Mr Kuldip Nayyar, something still shrouded in a miasma of mystery and confusion, let us look at the relevant facts as they are. Some of these are incontrovertible even when viewed from the Indian side. Not even a single super-patriot in India has so far claimed that Pakistan has conducted a nuclear explosion. But India's nuclear test explosion in 1974 was a self-confessed act. It does not need to be proved. To know the truth, one must simply refuse to be taken in by New Delhi's sophistry that by the 1974 Rajasthan explosion the country became a "nuclear power but not a nuclear weapons power". It is, indeed, a fact of history that it took the first atomic bombs to be produced and used only a few weeks after that fateful first nuclear test in 1945 in the Nevada desert.

The ability to make and explode a nuclear device, for whatever motive, demonstrates the capability to make a bomb. This is as simple as that. As a British daily had aptly remarked then: the blast conferred on India an easy capability of dropping an atomic bomb on a Pakistani city. Mrs Indira Gandhi had then felt free to declare: "India's nuclear policy is under constant review... the defence of our territorial integrity will be the paramount

consideration guiding our policy in this field." Her Foreign Minister, Sardar Swaran Singh, elaborated it by saying that "India might have to proceed with development of nuclear energy for *non- peaceful* purposes". Eleven years after, in 1985, India demonstrated, within full view of the international media, its capability to build and run a fast breeder reactor with domestic technology and fuel. A fast breeder is suitable for uranium enrichment. It can produce weaponsgrade material that can be used for building nuclear weapons. This development demonstrated India's double capacity for making bombs — using either plutonium or enriched uranium. Today India possesses a vast capacity for making nuclear weapons. Whether or not it has atomic bombs in the basement or on the shelf in an unassembled form is a matter for speculation since this is a well-kept secret. Not even the staunchest protagonists of non-proliferation in the West or in the East would like to talk about the Indian bomb. Such a thing is so unfashionable. One may add to the nuclear weapon capability India's drive for the acquisition of bloated conventional armaments. The budget presented by Mr Gandhi in the Indian Parliament last week records a big jump in defence spending, which has gone up by 22 per cent over the last budget to Rs 12,000 crore. This is part of a rapid escalation from year to year.

Because of this, the overall deficit in this year's budget is estimated to exceed Rs 5,000 crore. This speaks of an extraordinary pattern of priorities for a country which professes a strong commitment to the removal of poverty. Of course, nobody denies that this is a matter of sovereign privilege. Yet the fact remains that the scale of the Indian arms drive is too big for the comfort of India's small neighbours.

Note needs to be taken of New Delhi's efforts to arrange for the Indian community in the U.S. to launch a big media campaign and stage a demonstration in Washington against the reported U.S. plan for the sale of AWACS to Pakistan. The timing and place for the planned show are significant. The rally will be held on the Capitol Hill where a Congressional panel is due to begin hearings on a new 4.02 billion dollar U.S. aid package programme for Pakistan some time this month. The clear intention is to hinder the chances of Pakistan getting the AWACS and the U.S. aid. This stance must be seen in conjunction with certain interesting facts. India does not think the acquisition of AWACS base in itself. It is already planning to build its own version of AWACS. U.S. money, high technology and military equipment of certain types are not repugnant either. India is already negotiating to acquire hundreds of U.S. aircraft engines and supercomputers, both of which are of military value. It is also looking for other sophisticated products of U.S. technology. Yet New Delhi does not want to miss any opportunity to question the motives of its small neighbours and obstruct their acquisition of the means of improving their economic situation and defence capacity. It would be so much better for this region if India were to get reconciled to the fact that whether it is a question of the sale of AWACS or the U.S. aid to Pakistan, such matters have to be decided on the basis of the needs and perceptions of the two contracting parties, and not according to the subjective likes and dislikes of any third country. Any undue interest of this kind in the internal affairs of its neighbours and any overbearing manner and style, which India never stops displaying, are a clear negation of the principles of sovereign equality and non-interference which are universally recognised as the basis of State relations and which specifically form the foundation of SAARC [South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation] and NAM [Nonaligned Movement]

Mehdi Hashemi Confesses to Murder Charges

LD180943 Tehran IRNA in English 0905 GMT 18 Mar 87

[Text] Tehran, March 18, IRNA — Mehdi Hashemi, the former head of liberation movements and two of his accomplices, in a televised confession Tuesday night revealed that they had murdered three men last year in Qahderijan, Najafabad, Esfahan Province. Hashemi described his activities and conduct as "totally deviated".

On his motive for kidnapping and murder of the three persons, Hashemi said that he had received information that Abbasqoli Heshmat (father) 65 was planning to assassinate him.

Hashemi later had assigned two of his collaborators, Reza Moradi and Mohammad Kazem-Zadeh to murder Abbasqoli Heshmat. They first kidnapped him along with his two sons at gun point and later strangled them to death in an orchard outside Qahderijan.

The culprits then dumped the bodies of Abbasqoli and his two sons, Homauyoun and Saeed, 34 and 20 years old, in a well in the area and covered them with dirt.

On reasons for killing the two sons, the culprits said that they were afraid that the sons who had witnessed the kidnapping and killing of their father may turn them in to the police.

Hashemi said that he regretted having murdered the sons of Heshmat and described the act as "totally unislamic".

On arms smuggled from the Islamic Revolution's Guards Corps (IRGC), Hashemi said that after separation of the liberation movements from the IRGC he and his aides smuggled out the arms and hid them in safe places.

Moradi told viewers that on instructions from Hashemi he had taken part of the arms to Esfahan and later to his home in Qahderijan and had hidden them.

Kazem-Zadeh also said that for some time he worked with the liberation movements and after it was dissolved, and on orders of Hashemi took a truck load of arms and munitions to Qahderijan and hid them in the basement of his home.

Besharati Returns From Guyana Nonaligned Meeting

NC180830 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 0430 GMT 18 Mar 87

[Text] This morning our country's first Deputy Foreign Minister Mr Besharati returned to Tehran after his visit to Georgetown, Guyana at the head of a delegation. He participated in the extraordinary foreign ministers' session of the Nonaligned Movement on the problems of the Caribbean region and Latin America. After his arrival in Tehran, he spoke to our correspondent, reviewing the session's deliberations and describing their outcome, as follows:

[Begin recording] [Unidentified correspondent] Mr Besharati, on your return from the extraordinary session of the Nonaligned Movement on the problems of Latin America, could you please give us your assessment of the results of the session's proceedings?

[Besharati] In the name of God, the merciful, the compassionate. The extraordinary session of foreign ministers of the Nonaligned Movement took place over 5 days in Georgetown, the Guyanese capital. Although the purpose of the session was to review the problems of the countries of the Caribbean region and Latin America, it offered us a valuable opportunity to voice the grievances of our oppressed nation and to acquaint the participants and others with the problems and difficulties created for us by world oppression.

Eighty delegations took part in the session from various countries. In our capacity as a prominent, capable, and dedicated member of the Nonaligned Movement, we participated actively at the highest level. We spoke on all the topics included in the agenda. We had fresh ideas to propound, in which high-ranking Latin American representatives showed considerable interest. Our delegation exchanged views with more than 26 other delegations, both before and during the session. We discussed bilateral relations and our positions with countries holding similar views. Cuban Foreign Minister Mr Malmierca, one of the more influential figures in the region, thanked the Islamic Republic of Iran for its participation.

What was very conspicuous was the obvious isolation of the Iraqi delegation, which was very silent and not at all active or enthusiastic. The effusion the Iraqi regime displayed at various sessions at the beginning of the war seems to have waned in the past few years. The dazzling victories that our dear combatants have achieved on the fronts appear to have had an effect on the morale of Iraqi diplomats. This was very evident at the various meetings and gatherings.

In any case, the session was a valuable opportunity for us to voice our opinions and discuss our problems through the speeches we delivered. We also presented our country's views on the difficulties faced by Caribbean and Latin American countries. As you know, these countries are burdened with debts of $400 billion. The leaders of most Latin American countries declared that these should not be repaid; some held other views. However, the Islamic Republic of Iran looked at the matter closely and we stated that we should concentrate on the causes of the problem rather than its effects. We should ask why oppression gives such astronomical loans on such terms, because if all means and resources were used to pay the exorbitant interest, the total loan would still never be repaid. We said that we should create difficulties for oppression, otherwise it will create problems for us.

[Correspondent] Thank you. [end recording]

Ministry Says Opposition Group 80 Percent Smashed

LD181719 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 1630 GMT 18 Mar 87

[Text] The deputy of the Intelligence Ministry, in the course of an interview with reporters, announced: Through the continu-

ous efforts of the Intelligence Mnistry, 80 percent of the organization of the Feda'i-ye [Khalq organization] — majority wing, inside the country, has been smashed.

Oil Minister Announces New Distribution Policy

LD171840 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 1630 GMT 17 Mar 87

[Text] In an interview with reporters this afternoon, Oil Minister Aqazadeh announced the new policy on distribution of oil products. He said: For the sake of compatriots, the Oil Ministry will continue to supply rationed petrol at the rate of 30 rials per liter. However, those who wish to obtain more petrol than allowed by their ration allocations can do so beginning 21 March, in whatever quantity, from petrol stations at a price to be announced later.

Regarding the note in the Budget Bill passed by the Majlis on the increase in full prices, the oil minister said: As Oil Ministry revenue has been entirely earmarked for the imposed war, beginning on 21 March [beginning of year 1366] the price of kerosene will be 4 rials [figures as heard].

Regarding the price of gas, Mr Aqazadeh said: The price of gas has not changed. In addition, in the coming year the supply of gas through the mains will be carried out on an extensive scale throughout the country. He said that last year nearly 120,000 gas outlets were supplied. This is twice the level of the years 1361, 1362 and 1363 and some 40 percent more than in 1364.

Tehran Reports Budget Figures For Next Year

LD171833 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 1630 GMT 17 Mar 87

[Text] The Budget Bill of the country for the year 1366 was approved by the deputies of the Islamic Consultative Assembly. According to the report of our correspondent, in continuation of today's open session held this afternoon, the Budget Bill for the year 1366 was approved with 48 notes.

According to a single article the main part of this bill, the total budget of the country including income and other sources of credit is 7,426,034,754,000 [figure as heard] rials and as far as expenditure and other payments are concerned, it amounts to 7,426,034,754,000 rials.

Montazeri Compliments Air Force on Victories

LD171904 Tehran IRNA in English 1818 GMT 17 Mar 87

[Text] Qom, Central Prov., March 17, IRNA — In a meeting with a group of visiting Air Force personnel here Tuesday, Ayatollah Hoseyn 'Ali Montazeri lauded the Air Force personnel for their heroic contribution to the victories of Muslim forces of Iran at the war fronts.

The future leader of the Islamic Revolution told the visitors "you are performing a great act of worship and have defended the dignity of Islam and the Islamic Revolution."

The Air Force personnel despite their limited resources have done a great job, complimented Ayatollah Montazeri, noting "Certainly, the Iranian nation will never forget your spirit of self-sacrifice."

The revered ayatollah remarked that progressive and innovative ideas should be further encouraged in the country and the government should make necessary preparations to this end.

The Friday prayer leader of Qom and chairman of the assembly of experts, Ayatollah 'Ali Meshkini, who also attended the meeting expressed hope that one day the Islamic Revolution would spread throughout the world and the world's oppressed would achieve their liberation goals.

SAIRI's Hakim Reviews Situation in Iraq

NC180942 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 0330 GMT 18 Mar 87

[Excerpts] Hojjat ol-Eslam Hakim, chief of the Supreme Assembly of the Islamic Revolution of Iraq [SAIRI], is currently on a visit to the Khuzestan Province to inspect the victories of the Islamic combatants and the Iraqi Mojahedin, who fight under SAIRI command. He spoke to a Central News Unit correspondent on the politico-military situation in Iraq after the "Karbala'-5" operations, as well as the Iraqi regime's crimes, such as the murder of Iraqi nationals abroad.

He said: According to the latest reports, during the "Karbala'-5" operations the Iraqi Armed Forces suffered such heavy blows and immense casualties that it has not been able to recoup its loss of manpower. It has even been forced to utilize those wounded in war and to cancel the leave of all soldiers. In addition, the regime is concerned by the fact that desertions by Iraqi military personnel are increasing daily despite intense vigilance by their intelligence units. For example, 15 Iraqi soldiers recently sought refuge with the combatants of Islam. They brought their equipment with them and immediately took up positions beside the Islamic combatants along a 500-meter front to fight against the Zionist Iraqi forces.

Continuing his interview, the SAIRI chief said: Iraq's economic condition is deplorable. The regime has not been able to repay its foreign loans, much less meet the essential needs of its domestic budget. Due to this budget deficit, the Iraqi Zionist regime has been faced with problems concerning the purchase of armaments. [passage omitted] He added: The stance of the Iraqi ruling regime's protagonists has also undergone a change, and, consequently, these regimes have revised their policy vis-a-vis Iraq.

He referred to the increase in the Iraqi regime's crimes at home and abroad and gave some examples of its heinous atrocities in foreign countries, while at the same time, condemning U.S. support of this terrorist regime. He stated: Despite the fact that the United States professes to oppose any nurturing of terrorism, it supports the Iraqi terrorist regime. Examples of its terrorism are: Some time ago the agents of the Iraqi ruling regime abducted an Iraqi national in Sweden and (?killed) him. An Iraqi engineer in Italy has also been murdered. Similarly, the Iraqi Embassy in

Pakistan abducted two Iraqi students from Karachi University and chopped their bodies to bits, discovered later by the Pakistani police.

He called on the international community, as well as the countries in which the Iraqi regime's agents perpetrate such crimes, to punish these criminals. [passage omitted]

Iraqi POW's Repatriated; 26 Seek Asylum

LD171736 Tehran IRNA in English 1721 GMT 17 Mar 87

[Text] Tehran, March 17, IRNA — Twenty six out of 102 released disabled Iraqi prisoners of war (POW's) sought political asylum in the Islamic Republic of Iran minutes before they were scheduled to board a plane for return home.

The remaining 76 POW's were handed over to the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) officials at Tehran Mehrabad Airport. The POW's are expected to leave here for Iraq aboard an ICRC-chartered plane.

An official of the commission in charge of POW's told reporters at Tehran Mehrabad Airport that 600 Iraqi POW's have thus far been repatriated.

The official said that Iran would unilaterally release those Iraqi POW's crippled at the warfronts or those afflicted by some disease whom despite their bad health or unfitness had been despatched to the battlefields by the Baghdad government in total disregard of international conventions.

A list of eligible disabled POW's to be released would be given to ICRC, he added.

Guards Corps Announces Volunteers' Departure Dates

LD171203 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 1030 GMT 17 Mar 87

[Text] The Mobilization of the Oppressed unit of the Islamic Revolution Guards Corps has issued a statement announcing the departure dates of the extraordinary dispatch of the Mahdi Corps as follows: From the provinces of Hamadan, Sistan va Baluchestan, Kerman, Tehran, Chahar Mahall va Bakhtiari, Esfahan, and the town of Qom, departure will be 27 Esfand [18 March]. From the provinces of Hormozgan, Bushehr, and Bovir Ahmadi va Kohkiluyeh, departure will be on the 28th of Esfand [19 March]. The statement invites all the volunteers to register at the oppressed mobilization centers or at the resistance bases in mosques, state departments, schools, factories, and universities all over the country as soon as possible.

Forces Dispatched for Fronts

LD181202 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 1030 GMT 18 Mar 87

[Summary] According to reports from correspondents of the Central News Unit in three towns, the following groups of forces were dispatched to the fronts: 15 battalions of combat-specialist forces from Chalus left this morning after marching through the town; 3 battalions of volunteer forces of the Islamic Revolution Guards Corps left Shazand near Arak; and 1 battalion left from Zahedan.

Communique No 2,778 Reports Enemy Casualties

LD171724 Tehran IRNA in English 1717 GMT 17 Mar 87

[Text] Tehran, March 17, IRNA — Muslim forces of Iran inflicted heavy men and equipment losses on Iraqi troops in battles throughout the fronts Monday, said a military communique here Tuesday.

Joint Staff Communique Number 2,778 said that a number of Iraqi soldiers were killed or wounded and about 10 enemy gun emplacements destroyed in the southern fronts Monday when they were shelled by Iranian Gendarmerie forces, who also continued reconnoitering enemy positions in the western fronts.

Exchange of artillery and mortar fire continued throughout the fronts Monday, raging somewhat more heavily in the "Karbala'-5" and the "Karbala'-7" operational theaters.

In Hajj 'Umran, Sardasht, and Marivan, northwestern fronts, Iranian Muslim combatants reconnoitered and shelled enemy positions Monday, killing several Iraqi soldiers and destroying parts of enemy positions and supply routes.

In the Western fronts Monday, Iranian forces checked activities of Iraqi patrols in Mehran, Salehabad, Sumar and Qasr-e Shirin, inflicting several casualties and losses of enemy troops.

Iraqi forces were prevented from fortifying their positions in Pich-e Angizeh, Sharhani, and Bejliyeh by heavy Iranian artillery fire Monday.

Iran's Muslim combatants shelled Iraqi observations posts in the Majnun islands, Zeid, and Talayeh Monday, inflicting substantial casualties on enemy troops and halted their surveillance activities, the communique concluded.

No 2,779 Reports 6 Ships Intercepted

LD181644 Tehran IRNA in English 1636 GMT 18 Mar 87

[Text] Tehran, March 18, IRNA — Iranian naval forces Tuesday intercepted six cargo ships in the Strait of Hormuz, during their routine inspection to prevent any Iraqi-bound cargo from reaching Baghdad, said a military communique released here Wednesday.

Communique Number 2,779 of the Joint Staff Command of the Armed Forces said that over ten Iraqi gun-emplacements and observation posts, 12 munitions depots, and two vehicles were set ablaze and destroyed by the heavy fire of Iranian Muslim combatants in the western operational regions.

In the southern fronts, the communique said, Iraqi forces sustained substantial casualties and damage when Iranian Muslim forces shelled enemy positions. The Muslim combatants halted

movement of an armoured column of the Ba'thist troops, forcing it to change direction and retreat in the 'Eyn Khvosh region, it added.

Iranian Gendarmerie forces demolished a heavy vehicle, a command jeep, as well as a munitions depot of the Iraqi forces in their operational regions, said the communique.

The communique added that Iran's Air Force and anti-aircraft units foiled Iraqi reconnaisance flights. The Iranian Ground Forces, it added, continued consolidating their defensive positions throughout the war fronts, and heavily shelled Iraqi fortifications and supply axes inflicting considerable casualties and damage on the enemy.

Several Iraqi vehicle columns were subjected to the accurate fire of the Iranian Muslim combatants in Choman-Mustafa and Kalaleh area where enemy forces' movement was disrupted or brought to a halt, it added.

The communique furthermore said that the Iranian Muslim forces reconnoitred and checked Iraqi patrol activities, by dispatching two patrol units in Sar Dasht operational theater.

Troops Enjoy Full Superiority in 'Karbala' 5'

LD1809[illegible] Tehran IRNA in English 0940 GMT 18 Mar 87

[Text] Ahvaz, Khuzestan Prov., March 18, IRNA — The Muslim combatants of Iran over the last week set ablaze and destroyed some 30 Iraqi tanks and personnel carriers in "Karbala'-5" operational theater, Shalamcheh region, said a military commander here Wednesday.

During the week, he told IRNA, the Muslim troops destroyed another 13 Iraqi vehicles and a number of armoured equipment.

Meanwhile, the Iraqi Army stationed in eastern Basra suffered heavy losses as a result of which the enemy fire in the region was brought to a near halt and the movement of Iraqi troops curtailed, he added.

According to the commander, the "Karbala'-5" operational region has been turned into a graveyard of Iraqi armoured equipment, Iranian troops enjoy full superority and are checking all enemy movements.

Nicosia Reports Cypriot Tanker Hit by Missile

NC171530 Nicosia Domestic Service in Greek 1130 GMT 17 Mar 87

[Text] According to marine insurance circles in the Arab Gulf region, an Iranian vessel has hit the 100,000-ton Cypriot tanker *Pivot* with a missile, causing a fire to erupt aboard the tanker. The blaze has been successfully extinguished and the vessel, which is carrying crude oil, is now being towed to Dubayy. There were no casualties reported as a result of this attack, which took place near the Iranian island of Abu Musa.